

# M Hawaii MARINE

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MTT gets MCBH  
on target  
A-3



Waikiki, under  
the sea  
B-1



Got mud?  
Swamp Romp  
C-1

## Bronze Star awarded for heroic acts

**Lance Cpl. Roger L. Nelson**  
*Combat Correspondent*

The Bronze Star was presented March 24, to Gunnery Sgt. Torain S. Kelley, training chief, Combat Service Support Group 3, here, for his heroic actions in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

"I think the younger Marines deserve it more than I do," said Kelley. "When I found out I was getting it, my first thought was that I didn't do enough to deserve it."

Kelley recalled the events that

took place Oct. 30, 2004, when he was serving as company gunnery sergeant, Bravo Company, Battalion Landing Team, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 7, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, Calif.

"We went to pick up a platoon that was left in the field, and on the way there one of our 7-ton trucks broke down, and I remember thinking, 'What should we do first, fix the truck or go pick up the Marines?'" said Kelley. "We finally

managed to get the truck fixed and headed back out to pick up the Marines.

"We got the Marines and as we were driving, we realized we had gone too far and needed to turn around. When we turned around, we went through a really congested area, and the same truck broke down again."

According to Kelley, a Fort Worth, Texas native, the Marines who were riding in the broken truck were sent to the remaining

*See BRONZE STAR, A-5*



Lance Cpl. Roger L. Nelson

Col. Brian J. Hearnberger, commanding officer, Combat Service Support Group 3, presents Gunnery Sgt. Torain S. Kelley, with the Bronze Star, March 24, at the CSSG-3, maintenance bay. Kelly was presented with this award because of his heroic achievement with combat operations involving conflict with an opposing force, while in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Sgt. Joe Lindsay

Lance Cpl. Anthony Mitchell, intelligence specialist, 3rd Platoon, Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, from Burlington, Colo., aims in on suspected insurgents during a company-wide operation conducted near the remote mountain village of Salar Ban in the Shuryak Valley of Kunar Province in eastern Afghanistan.

## 1/3 engages in heavy firefight

Marines discover 1,000-plus pounds of explosives in safe house

**Sgt. Joe Lindsay**  
*Combat Correspondent*

**SALAR BAN, Afghanistan** — In conjunction with soldiers from the Afghan National Army, Marines from Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, based out of Marine Corps Base Hawaii, recently conducted a week-long company-wide operation led by Charlie Company Commander Capt. Jared Spurlock in the Shuryak Valley of Kunar Province in eastern Afghanistan.

Charlie Company's 3rd Platoon spent 15 days in the field and, along with the rest of the company, engaged in numerous firefights with the enemy during the first week of the operation while also placing 11 suspected Anti-Coalition Militia and ACM collaborators in the status of personnel under control, noted 1st Lt. Kevin Frost, platoon commander, 3rd Platoon, Charlie Company, 1/3.

The most significant of these battles occurred near the remote mountain village of Salar Ban in the Shuryak Valley, moments after Marines discov-

ered an alleged safe house where they found more than 1,000 pounds of explosives suspected to be potentially used for making improvised explosive devices, commonly known as IEDs.

"Our mission on this operation was simple – to close with and destroy the enemy," said Spurlock, a native of Pocatello, Idaho. "The Shuryak Valley is a known enemy stronghold in our area of operations. We knew the enemy was out there, we just didn't know exactly where."

The Marines of Charlie Company's 3rd Platoon would find out soon enough.

"During our reconnaissance in force, we searched numerous villages in the area looking for Anti-Coalition Militia members and collaborators, as well as for weapons and to gather intelligence," said Spurlock. "We had reports that there was enemy in the vicinity of Salar Ban, so we went to that village to talk to local residents and village leaders to get a feeling of enemy activity in the area."

What the Marines found was a literal ghost town.



Sgt. Joe Lindsay

Marines examine a stick from the explosives cache discovered by Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, during a company-wide operation near the remote mountain village of Salar Ban in the Shuryak Valley of Kunar Province in eastern Afghanistan.

"The insurgents are like ghosts," said Gunnery Sgt. Paul Davis, company gunnery sergeant for Charlie Company, 1/3, and a native of Laurens, S.C. "They just disappear into the mountains and sometimes

you see them and sometimes you don't."

"I knew there was something wrong when we rolled up and the vil-

*See 1/3, A-7*

## 3/3 helps Iraqi town

**Sgt. Roe F. Seigle**  
*Combat Correspondent*

**ARWANAH, Iraq** — When 22-year-old Cpl. Jeff Globis taped a picture in his Kevlar helmet of his wife, he did so knowing it would be the only way he could see her for seven months.

"I think of her all throughout the day," said the team leader from Winthrop Harbor, Ill. "It was hard to say goodbye to her, but my Marines are my family, and I can turn to them for support."

Globis is deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom with hundreds of Marines and Sailors from Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment out of Hawaii.

Globis and the Marines from Lima Company have the duty of keeping law and order in this remote, forward operating base located along the Euphrates River in the western Al Anbar Province.

Life for the Marines here means daily patrols with Iraqi soldiers to maintain a presence and dissuade any potential insurgent activity. Rifles in hand, they patrol in their Humvees and sometimes on foot. They interact with the locals, who seem, for the most part, friendly to the Marines and Iraqi soldiers.

The Marines are partnered with and mentor Iraqi soldiers, who patrol regularly with the Marines to gain the necessary military skills to conduct operations on their own, which coalition forces say will happen by year's end.

After all, it will ultimately be the Iraqi soldiers who permanently replace coalition forces in Al Anbar Province, which has arguably housed the worst of Iraq's insurgency over the past three years.

When they are not actively patrolling the streets, the Marines are continuously preparing for their next mission. During this time, conversations about home life, loved ones, and movies they're missing back in the states surface.

"I do not mind it here too much," said Lance Cpl. Manuel Weiss of Crawfordville, Fla., as he put on a bullet-proof vest and snapped the straps on his Kevlar helmet before going

*See 3/3, A-6*



# News Briefs

### Thrift Shop celebrates 51 years

The Thrift Shop will celebrate its 51st birthday, Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will be free balloons, shave ice, a bounce house, and goodies for the kids. Stop in and enjoy the fun. Scholarship applications will be available as well. For more information, call 254-0841.

### Key Volunteer Appreciation

April 7, there will be a Key Volunteer Appreciation Ceremony at Pop Warner Field from 4 to 6 p.m.

This is a special event organized by Marine Corps Family Team Building to show appreciation to all the Key Volunteers and their families for all their hard work. There will be a short ceremony followed by a social hour with live music, refreshments, and bouncy houses for the kids.

Each Key Volunteer will receive a ticket for a random drawing and chance to win a prize.

For more information or to RSVP, contact 1stLt Eve Baker at 257-7777, eve.baker@usmc.mil.

### Annual Father-Daughter Dance

The seventh annual Father-Daughter Dance will be held at the Officers' Club Lanai Ballroom from 5:30 to 9 p.m., Saturday. Tickets are \$13.50 per person and include buffet dinner, door prizes and entertainment.

For tickets or more information, call the ASYMCA at 254-4719.

### Promotion Briefs

Major James McLaughlin, enlisted promotions section head, Headquarters Marine Corps, will be giving three briefs April 7.

The first brief is scheduled for 10 a.m. at Camp Smith's Pollock Theater. The second and third briefs are scheduled for 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. aboard Marine Corps Base Hawaii at the Base Theater. Each brief will last approximately one hour with a 30-minute question and answer period to follow. As the Base Theater's parking lot is now closed, parking is available at the Bowling Alley and behind Building 4009. The target audience for this brief is all officers, SNCOs, and sergeants who will be in zone for promotion. For more information, contact Gunnery Sgt. Hodges, base adjutant chief at 257-7712.

### Commissary Closure

The Base Commissary will be closed for inventory April 10 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. It will reopen for business at 1 p.m. and continue normal operations.

### Parking Lot Closure

The Base Theater parking lot will be closed until Aug. 23 for repairs and improvements.

For more information, call Base Facilities at 257- 2171.

### Hawaii Marine Accepts Letters

The Hawaii Marine welcomes comments for the "Letters to the Editor" section. Letters should be clear and concise. The Hawaii Marine staff reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and length. Comments must be signed with a full name and a telephone number must be provided.

Hawaii Marine also accepts news briefs containing relevant information pertaining to Marine Corps Base Hawaii.

All letters and news briefs should be emailed to: editor@hawaiimarine.com.

### Important Phone Numbers:

On-Base Emergencies	911
Military Police	257-7114
Child Protective Service	832-5300
Fraud, Waste, Abuse & EEO	257-8852
Business Management Hotline	257-3188
Pothole & Streetlight Repair	257-2380
Base Information	449-7110
MCBH Duty Chaplain	257-7700

## IT'S THE LAW! LESS THAN 30 DAYS LEFT TO FILE YOUR INCOME TAX

### MCBH Tax Center

Don't be like Richard Hatch the first survivor. Remember the first season of the groundbreaking reality TV show, "Survivor?" The winning survivor was bold, calculating, and upfront about his devious approach to the game. He was so comfortable in his own skin that he paraded around naked. Some would say it was not a pretty picture. His name was Richard Hatch. He was the first to be named survivor and won the \$1 million prize.

Guess where the once-millionaire survivor is now? He's in jail. He was found guilty of tax evasion for not paying income taxes on the \$1 million he won on "Survivor." Sentencing is scheduled for later this year and Hatch is facing a potential sentence of several years in federal prison. For his sake, Hatch's survival skills will translate over into the prison yard.

His predicament should cause everyone to pause and take note ...

When must I file income taxes? For most of us, the deadline is April 15, every year. However, if you are assigned to a

combat zone or have supported a contingency operation, Combat Duty Zone Tax Extension may apply to you and your spouse. This extends the deadline to file and pay taxes for a minimum of 180 days from the last day spent in the combat zone. The combat zone extension is automatic. Taxpayers can also apply for a six-month extension of the filing deadline.

Regardless of the extensions, do not wait to file! Marine Corps Base Hawaii Tax Center is fully staffed thru April 25.

Why file at the MCBH Tax Center? First, because it's free. This means a savings of time and money that you would have spent if you went out in town to have your return done. On average, this means that you would have to pay \$100 or more to have the simplest of returns done for you.

Second, the Tax Center does it all. They will do prior year returns, current and prior year amendments to returns, and state tax returns for all states. If you have your taxes done out in town, chances are the commercial tax preparers will not even consider doing an out-of-state return or will charge you an arm and a leg to do it. The tax center will do any state return - again, free of charge.

Third, the Tax Center has expertise, to include, three civilians who have decades of tax experience, a staff that has had H&R Block tax preparation training, and an attorney. This is a level of expertise that is uncommon at many of the commercial

tax preparation centers. This enables the Tax Center to provide a large variety of tax services.

Fourth, Tax Center is convenient. It is centrally located in Building 401 on base, just across from the skatepark and playground on Mokapu Road. You can call 257-1399/1534 to set up an appointment.

Fifth, if you used the Tax Center in the past, we can access your previous returns to ensure you carry forward all of your appropriate deductions and credits. If you start to come in now, you can begin to build a thorough financial profile. For multiple year customers, the MCBH Tax Center can print you out a detailed financial report that breaks down your income, deductions, credits, tax paid, etc. You can use this report to easily track your financial progress.

Sixth, if you are reading this you are probably owed a refund from the IRS. Claim what is yours!

Finally, there are a lot of military specific tax issues related to Earned Income Tax Credit, the Thrift Savings Plan and other aspects of military service (for example, there is a New Jersey tax exemption that some may qualify for due to active duty status) that we see so frequently, you are better served here than out in town.

For more information, or to make appointments call 257-1399. The Tax Center will be open full time in Building 401, Mokapu Road, from now until April 25.



FARRELL



SHIRREFFS

### Headquarters Battalion

Sgt. Major Erik H. Shirreffs relieved Sgt. Major Michael A. Farrell as sergeant major, Headquarters Battalion, here, in a post and relief ceremony at the Base Theater, March 29. Shirreffs transferred from Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38, San Diego, where he served as the squadron's sergeant major. Farrell is transferring to Recruiting Station, 4th Marine Corps District, Frederick, Md., where he will be assigned as recruiting station sergeant major.



LAFLEUR



WILKINSON

### 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment

Sgt. Major Patrick A. Wilkinson relieved Sgt. Major Robert J. LaFleur as sergeant major, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, here, in a post and relief ceremony held March 28. Wilkinson transferred to K-Bay from Headquarters Battery, 5th Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., in February for his assignment as sergeant major for 2/3. LaFleur is transferring to Recruiting Station, Springfield Mass., where he will be assigned as recruiting station sergeant major.



## MCBH's Pride Day, April 14

Marines work with the Environmental and Protection Agency at Nuupia Ponds to get rid of unwanted invasive plants during Pride Day last year.

Each year, Marines and Sailors join forces to rid the base of trash and debris. This year, Master Sgt. Sheldon A. Comer, deputy base inspector, is again encouraging all units to participate in this base-wide event. "The significance of Pride Day was to focus on an intense, thorough systematic field day of the entire installation," said Comer of last year's efforts. Pride Day is scheduled to start at 8 a.m.

## Weekend weather outlook

### Today



**Day** — Mostly cloudy with scattered showers. Locally heavy rainfall possible. Southeast winds around 10 mph. Chance of rain, 50 percent.

**Night** — Mostly cloudy with scattered showers. Southeast winds around 10 mph. Chance of rain 50, percent.

**High** — 72-78  
**Low** — 62-72

### Saturday



**Day** — Partly cloudy with scattered showers. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph. Chance of rain, 50 percent.

**Night** — Partly cloudy with scattered showers. East winds around 10 mph. Chance of rain, 50 percent.

**High** — 72-78  
**Low** — 62-72

### Sunday



**Day** — Mostly cloudy with numerous showers. East winds around 10 mph. Chance of rain, 70 percent.

**Night** — Mostly cloudy with numerous showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph. Chance of rain 70 percent.

**High** — 72-78  
**Low** — 62-72

## Hawaii MARINE

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MCB HAWAII, KANEOHE BAY, HAWAII 96863  
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Marines and Sailors from Mairne Corps Base Hawaii sight in through scopes during a training exercise, March 3. A mobile training team from Quantico, Va., spent a week and a half teaching Marines and Sailors how to properly set up and execute the new course of fire.

# Marines learn new field-fire tables

Mobile training team gets Marines, Sailors ready for new requirements

**Story and Photos by Cpl. Sara A. Carter**  
*Community Relations Chief*

One of the newest changes the Marine Corps has made to marksmanship training is the implementation of new field-fire tables that Marines, specifically infantrymen, will be required to shoot and qualify on annually.

A mobile training team from Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., that assisted in the development of the new tables, spent a week and a half training combat marksmanship trainers here. These newly qualified trainers are replacing the primary marksmanship instructors and will be qualified to teach all levels of combat marksmanship.

“MTTs were created to flood the Marine Corps with the quality of trainers needed to teach the combat marksmanship side of shooting,” said Sgt. Jeremy Eshleman, Scout Sniper School instructor, Quantico, Va.

The personnel assigned to the mobile training team have been developing their own skills through multiple sources of combat marksmanship schools, ranging from attending civilian combat shooting schools to having hired instructors to come to the unit. The basis of the MTT is a mixture of personnel from Quantico’s Small Arms Weapons Instructor’s Course staff, an Advance Marksmanship Course available for Marines to take, and the base’s Weapon Training Battalion.

The individuals attending the training were briefed on the different tables Marines must now shoot in order to qualify annually.

Qualification for all Marines includes firing on the traditional known distance course of fire, which is dubbed table one, and table two, shooting from the 25- and 50-yard lines while wearing a flack jacket and helmet.

Although all units in the Marine Corps will fire table three, only infantry units are required to shoot table four, said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jeffrey Eby, officer-in-charge, Small Arms Weapons Instructor Course. Marines in other Military Occupational Specialties or deploying units can shoot table four upon request.

Tables three and four are not for qualification, but unit commanders are expected to uphold the standards taught during the course of fire.

Eby said he hopes that all Marines will be required to shoot all tables in the future.

The drills taught during the tables are based on actions required in urban combat: Pivots, shooting while moving, engaging targets up close and in the distance, and improving accuracy are skills taught during training.

When Marines enter a room, they either enter from opposite sides of a doorway or button hook into the room, Eby said, practicing 90-degree and 180-degree pivots will help them develop their entry skills.

Once Marines clear a room, they move toward a dominant position, a spot within the room that allows each Marine to control the occupants and get out of the doorway where enemy bullets will be aimed. Because of the

rapid pace of entry, Marines are taught to shoot while moving.

As they move toward a dominant position, targets may appear directly in front of the shooter, so Marines are taught to traverse the upper body like a tank turret and shoot laterally.

Marines also learn how to shoot a hammer pair, two quick shots used for close targets, and a controlled pair, two slower shots for targets in the distance. Close targets are engaged with hammered pairs to increase the speed in which an enemy is killed, but hammer pairs decrease accuracy.

Marines also have the opportunity to shoot using an optic or aiming device.

“All of the steps within the tables are ment to be executed during urban combat environments that we find ourselves in today,” Eby said. “After firing table four, an individual still needs to complete his skill progression by participation in team room-clearing engagements, urban patrolling and engagements.”

The Marine Corps holds this additional training during Desert Viper exercise at Twentynine Palms, Calif., under the supervision of the Tactics, Techniques, Exercise Control Group.

The last four years of war in Afghanistan and Iraq have shown the Corps that not only the infantry needs to know these skills, Eby said.

“Whoever thought that being a reporter, aircrew mechanic or motor transport operator should be eliminated from the grunt stuff hasn’t been paying attention to the Military Occupational Specialties of casualties in the last four years,” he continued.

Eby said he thinks that complete understanding of combat marksmanship techniques will allow Marines to win a fight and survive. He also believes increased weapons-handling capabilities will allow a Marine to keep the weapon in the fight and wear gear properly to enhance its effectiveness.

These tables are not a totally new concept. According to Eby, infantry Marines have been shooting similar course of fire for many years. In the early 1990s the Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team Company initiated what they called the Enhanced Marksmanship Program. That program was taken from the Joint Special Operations Command qualification developed by the Army.

“The battlefield has changed, and we, as a Corps, are adapting and improving our skills in this area,” he said.

The Corps modified the course to fire 5.56 mm instead of the Army version of the 9 mm, but that was just the starting point.

Initial modifications to the JSOC were made by the Enhanced Marksmanship Program of 2nd Marine Division and refined again by SAWIC.

According to Eby, the revisions SAWIC made were to ensure Marines shoot multiple runs through the course quickly, but without rushing the tasks.

There are two MTT groups that travel to different bases, said Eshleman. One group will train Marines at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C.; Hawaii; and Camp Lejeune, N.C., while the other group will travel to Edson Range, Okinawa; and Camp Pendelton, Calif.

The group of six Marines currently training here will make their next stop in North Carolina in May when they train the Devil Dogs in Camp Lejeune.

“We’ve learned a lot of good information,” said Sgt. Anthoney Prince, who runs the regiment’s Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer. “This is training I will pass on to my Marines.”



Sgt. Jeremy Eshleman, a scout sniper instructor, Mobile Training Team, Quantico, Va., watches as a Marine attending a training exercise on the new course of field fire draws his rifle and prepares to properly engage a target while he moves through the course.



Petty Officer 1st Class Maxwell Johnson, Patrol Squadron 4, here, sights in through a scope during a training exercise on the new course of field fire.



Sgt. Joel Reilly, a combat marksmanship instructor from Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., adjusts the sights on a Marine’s rifle during a training exercise to teach marksmanship trainers, here, the new field-fire tables.



# Lava Dogs remember one of their own

1/3 Assaultman was killed in vehicle accident

**Sgt. Joe Lindsay**  
*Combat Correspondent*

**ASADABAD, Afghanistan** — Lava Dogs from 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, based out of Marine Corps Base Hawaii, recently held memorial services aboard Jalalabad Airfield for Lance Cpl. Nicholas Anderson, 21, an assaultman with Weapons Platoon, Bravo Company, 1/3, who was killed in a nonhostile vehicle accident March 13 in the Nangahar Province of eastern Afghanistan while serving in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Anderson, a 2003 graduate of Sauk Prairie High School and a native of Sauk City, Wisc., died en route to Bagram Airfield shortly after being airlifted from the scene of the accident, which occurred during a convoy mission near 1/3’s forward operating base at Torkham Gate, noted Sgt. Naiche Kennedy, a fellow assaultman who served as Anderson’s section leader with Weapons Platoon, Bravo Company, 1/3.

“Lance Corporal Anderson’s convoy was pursuing a suspicious vehicle when the accident occurred,” said Kennedy, a San Diego native. “Anderson was serving as the gunner and riding in the turret when the vehicle rolled.”

“Officially, the cause of the accident is still under investigation, but anyone who has seen the road conditions out here knows the cause,” continued Kennedy. “The state of the roads in Afghanistan is beyond comprehension. It is ridiculous how bad they are. In Afghanistan, we face danger during contact with the enemy, but we also face danger every single time we are on these roads out here.”

Staff Sgt. Ronald Jones, platoon sergeant, Weapons Platoon, Bravo Company, 1/3, spoke in a similar vein regarding the road conditions in Afghanistan.

“I think it is a testament to the skill of our drivers and their training along with the safety precautions we implement that there haven’t been more accidents of this nature,” said Jones, a native of Fayetteville, N.C. “It is extremely dangerous driving on these roads and simply getting around in this country is hazardous. It is nothing but boulders, rocks, potholes, debris and livestock on these roads – not to mention IEDs (improvised explosive devices). Imagine the worst country dirt road you’ve ever seen back in the states and then magnify that about a thousand times, and throw in the fact that people are trying to kill you and that’s what we’re dealing with over here.”

“Losing such a fine young Marine like Lance Corporal Anderson in this



Photo courtesy of Staff Sgt. Ronald Jones

**Lance Cpl. Nicholas Anderson, 21, an assaultman with Weapons Platoon, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, glances toward the camera during a light moment in Afghanistan shortly before his death. Anderson, a native of Sauk City, Wisc., died March. 13 while en route to Bagram Airfield shortly after being airlifted from the scene of a Humvee accident near 1/3’s forward operating base at Torkham Gate in the Basawot Province of eastern Afghanistan.**

manner is a tragedy,” continued Jones. “He told me that he joined the Marines to go to combat, and I know he would have preferred to die in combat, but that doesn’t change the

on the roads,” added Kennedy, “but given the conditions out here, it is practically inevitable that there will be accidents. We all know the risks, but it is still tearing us apart, losing Lance

Marine Corps.

“He wasn’t just my roommate and he wasn’t just a fellow Marine, he was my friend,” said Emery, a native of DuQuoin, Ill. “I couldn’t believe it

how saddened we all are by his loss. Lance Corporal Anderson took every assignment given to him to heart and always did his best. He was one of those types of people that everyone just liked being around. He was not only an outstanding Marine, he was an outstanding person. I will never forget him,” admitted the Crewe, Va., native.

“Lance Corporal Anderson was a well-disciplined Marine and he carried himself with a maturity beyond his years,” added Jones. “He simply loved being a Marine. I would like to say to his family back in Wisconsin, especially to his mother and father, that they raised a good son. They must have done a fine job raising him for him to turn out as good as he did.”

Kennedy seemed to echo Jones’ sentiments when talking about Anderson’s family back in Wisconsin.

“They did an awesome job raising him,” said Kennedy. “If I have a son someday, I want him to be like Lance Corporal Anderson.”

“I miss him,” added Emery, fighting back the emotion as he described his friend. “I’m going to miss him forever.”

“We all know the dangers over here, and Lance Corporal Anderson was never one to back down from a mission. He excelled over here in Afghanistan. He loved being a Marine and he was on the right track to go far in the Marine Corps.”

fact that he gave his life for his country. He was on a convoy mission in a combat zone and just that in and of itself is inherently dangerous. We all know the dangers over here, and Lance Corporal Anderson was never one to back down from a mission. He excelled over here in Afghanistan. He loved being a Marine and he was on the right track to go far in the Marine Corps.”

“We are as safe as humanly possible

Corporal Anderson. He was not only a good Marine, he was a good person. All of us in Bravo Company and in 1/3 are hurting really badly after his loss.”

Perhaps no one with 1/3 is feeling that pain more than Lance Cpl. Justin Emery, an assaultman who served in the same platoon and company alongside Anderson in addition to being his roommate back at MCB Hawaii. By all accounts, Emery was Anderson’s closest friend in the

when they told me he was dead. It’s still hard to believe. It’s just not something I think I have fully accepted yet. It’s just hard to think that I’m not going to be able to see him anymore.”

Other members of Anderson’s platoon said they felt similar emotions.

“We are all deeply affected by the death of Lance Corporal Anderson,” said Gunnery Sgt. Alvin Bassfield, company gunnery sergeant for Bravo Company, 1/3. “Words can’t describe

## From the Edge



Sgt. Brandon Ray, infantry squad leader, 1/3, Blue Ridge, Ga.

*To the most wonderful woman on earth – Rachel. I want to thank you for the great job you’ve done supporting and loving me during this incredibly tough time for you. I continue counting down the days until you’re in my arms again. I love you Rachel.*

Staff Sgt. Johnny Vasquez, infantry platoon sergeant, 1/3, Katy, Texas.

*I would like to say hi and love you to Denyell and Zakari. Daddy is doing fine here in the mountains of Afghanistan and will be home by the time you all know it. Hey, Zak, let’s go to “Chuck-E-Cheese” for pizza, and baby, let’s go shopping when I get back. See the both of you soon. Love ya.*





# Safety: Retro-reflective gear mandated on MCBH

**Bill Minnie**  
*Base Safety Center*

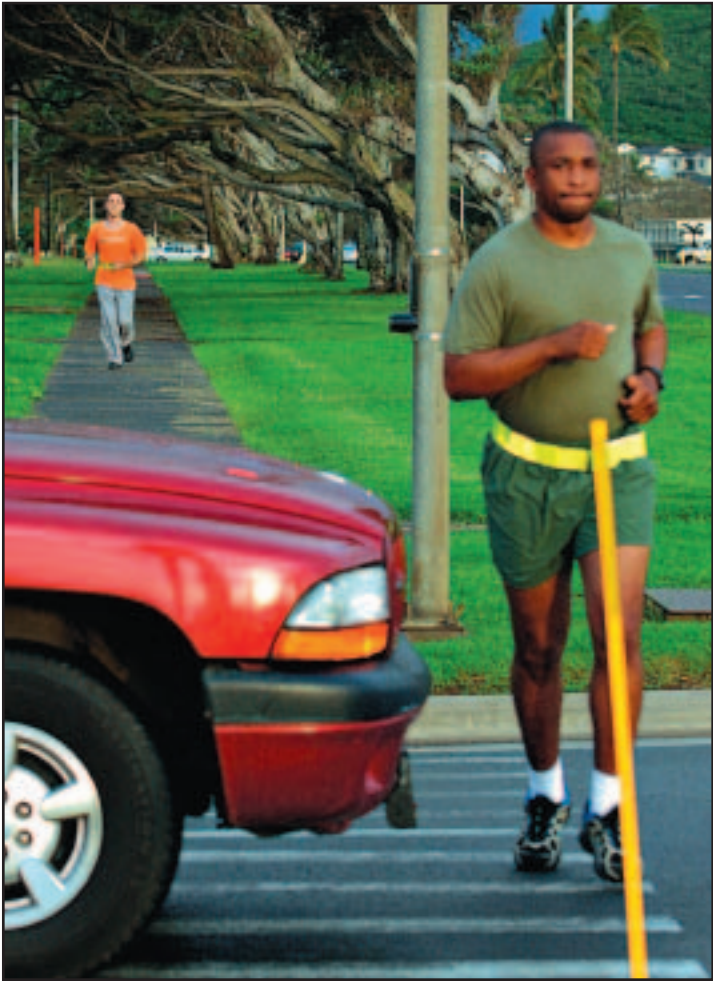
Thousands of people are injured or killed every year as a result of collisions with automobiles. Therefore, pedestrians and bicyclists must do everything possible to ensure drivers can see them, especially during the evening and early morning hours.

Base Order 5500.15A CH 9 requires retro-reflective gear to be worn after evening colors and before morning colors. In the past, it was thought wearing white or light-colored clothing made pedestrians visible at night, but recent studies show this is not the case.

It has also been proven fluorescent colored fabrics create no greater visibility at night than white ones do. The fact is, drivers approaching people wearing white must be within 180 feet to actually see them. Tests show that under ideal, flat-road conditions, a driver traveling at 60 mph needs 260 feet to stop. Add to the equation darkness, fog, smoke or rain

and the time needed to react increases significantly. This is where retro-reflective gear comes in. Retro-reflective materials make the wearer more visible, since the material returns light back to the source, rather than absorb or scatter it as regular fabrics would. Pedestrians and bicyclists can greatly improve their visibility by wearing clothing that incorporates reflective materials, which are either sewn onto or woven into the fabric. Because the eye is attracted to motion, wearing reflective articles on parts of the body that move more than others, such as the end of limbs, is particularly effective.

These days, manufacturers produce many different items including reflective vests (similar to the kind worn by traffic crossing guards), reflective arm and ankle bands, shoes and backpacks with reflective patches, and even T-shirts and men’s suits that use reflective fabric. Clothing that incorporates reflective materials is available in most sports equipment stores.



Cpl. Megan L. Stiner

**Runners on base practice safety by wearing reflector belts on a morning run. Individuals who are out before 8 a.m. and after evening colors are required to wear a reflector belt as a safety measure to ensure vehicles can see them if they are running, walking or riding a bicycle.**

*The next time you walk, run or bicycle during the hours of darkness, Base Safety recommends following these simple steps to improve your visibility to drivers:*

- If there is a sidewalk, use it.
- If you’re on foot and there is no sidewalk,use the shoulder of the road and face the traffic.
- Use well-lit routes.
- Wear light colored clothing or reflective wrist and ankle bands.
- Carry a small flashlight.
- Don’t use a headphone or a device that will impair hearing.
- Don’t travel alone in strange deserted areas.

## BRONZE STAR, From A-1

trucks. The truck was then towed by another truck. “After we split up the Marines, we took off and had to cross a bridge going over the Euphrates River,” said the Bronze Star recipient. “Once everyone was across, a suicide bomber hit the right side of the 7-ton between the cab and gas tank, and that bad boy went up like a Christmas tree. I had thought to myself that maybe he had missed, but wasn’t the case at all.”

Kelley said he saw a child on the side of the road selling gas and immediately thought he was the bomber but was assured by his commanding officer that it wasn’t the child. “We then drove my truck over to the truck that was on fire and got within 10 feet of the burning truck. I remember feeling the heat and thinking that it was extremely hot,” said Kelley. “As we walked toward the truck, I spotted a Marine that needed my help, but when we got within three or four feet all of the ammunition that was in the truck started going off. So I told my driver to hold on, because we’re no good to these Marines if we become casualties ourselves. I felt so guilty that I couldn’t help that Marine and said to myself, ‘God, I just let these Marines down.’”

Shortly after the truck was bombed, the enemy started firing mortar rounds at the Marines, said Kelley.

“We started getting the Marines in a safe point, while ducking and dodging sniper fire and tried to create a perimeter,” said the 35-year-old. “At this point, all we could do is get the bodies out and send them back. During this whole event, I don’t think I saw one Marine look scared or frightened. They all looked angry and upset, but still did what they were trained to do. We all just thought it was a very cowardly way to fight.”

Kelley said it wasn’t until a few days later that he became frightened.

“It hit me that these people we’re fighting against are for real, and I realized they would do anything to cause harm to my Marines and myself (at) the first chance they get,” said Kelley.

“After the event on

October 30, I didn’t think anything like that was going to happen again. Boy was I wrong,” said Kelley. “We were moving from the southwest part of Fallujah to a new firm base and as we moved, insurgents jumped out and started shooting at us. We moved about 150 meters, and we were still being shot at. A few seconds later, I heard a loud explosion to my left side, and the next thing I know I was thrown through a wall and thought to myself ‘That’s it. I’m done.’”

Kelley heard Marines screaming after the blast and rushed to help them with the assistance of a Navy hospital corpsman. It turned out that a rocket-propelled grenade landed within five feet of two Marines severely injuring them.

“We started accessing casualties and really doing everything we could to help the Marines,” said Kelley. “After checking accountability, we knew there were at least four casualties after the attack. Two Marines had to be medically evacuated from the spot, and that’s when I realized shrapnel had also hit me. After the ‘doc’ confirmed that I was hit in the back, I went back. I went back and got patched up and was back out two days later.”

According to Kelley, the most important thing was getting his injured Marines back to safety.

“The scariest part of the two events was the thought of losing my Marines. Not once, but twice,” said Kelley. “I could’ve cared less for my own well-being. They were all like my young kids, and I just wanted to bring everybody home.”

“When you become a senior Marine, you become number two and the Marines under you become number one, and my first instinct was to get them all out of harm’s way.”

Kelley said, Marines do an outstanding job and everyone wearing the Marine Corps uniform are his heroes.

“Receiving the Bronze Star is a bittersweet feeling,” said Kelley. “But I would gladly give it back in exchange for the lives of all the Marines that we lost.”

## What you should know about Calling 911 on MCBH

### Base Safety Center

A young Marine fell out of the physical fitness test run short of the finish and was having difficulty breathing and maintaining consciousness. The person who called for help dialed the seven-digit phone number, 257-2301, and a direct line to the Military Police Office. MPO responded and determined that medical attention was needed. The MPO dispatcher was called for medical assistance. In all, it took approximately 30 minutes for the appropriate agency to respond. The Marine was transported to a local medical center and was treated and released. This situation could have had a very grim outcome because the existing 911 system was not utilized as designed.

The 911 network is the official national emergency phone number and a vital part of the emergency response and disaster preparedness system throughout the United States and includes all Department of Defense installations. At Marine Corps Base Hawaii, dialing 911 quickly connects to a the Regional Dispatch Center at Pearl Harbor Naval Station where dispatchers route calls to local emergency medical, fire and law enforcement agencies. Once the call is determined that the caller is calling from a military installation, the call is immediately directed to the RDC. The 911 line is reserved for emergency calls to report a crime in progress, a fire, or to request an ambulance. Using 911 for nonemergency calls may delay the arrival of help for people caught in real emergencies.

A proposed wireless Enhanced 911, an E911 system, is scheduled to be implemented aboard base sometime later this year. The wireless E911 program is an important part of the 911 system and applies modern communications technology and upgrades to the existing technology. The wireless E911 will provide the precise location of 911 calls from wireless phones

anywhere on base. These calls will then be forwarded directly to the RDC.

Dial 911 only for an emergency. An emergency is any serious medical problem that can include chest pain, seizure, bleeding; any type of fire as at business, in a car, or any building. It also includes any life-threatening situations such as fights where weapons are used.

Do not pick up the telephone and put it down if you don't hear a dial tone. If you do that, you will tie up the telephone network and delay obtaining a line. Stay on the line until you hear the dial tone. If you hear a fast busy signal, that means that all circuits are busy and you should try your call again later.

Do not program 911 into your auto-dial telephone. It may accidentally be dialed.

If you dial 911 in error, do not hang up the telephone. Instead, stay on the line and explain to the dispatcher that you dialed by mistake and that you do not have an emergency.

Be patient as the dispatcher asks you questions. While you are answering the dispatcher's questions, he or she is entering or writing down the information.

Be prepared to describe your exact location and the location of the emergency, to include street name and building number, installation name and prominent features in close proximity.

Be prepared to describe the persons involved in any incident. This includes their race, sex, age, height and weight, color of hair, description of clothing, and whether they were wearing a hat, glasses, or have facial hair.

Listen to the dispatcher's instructions for assistance if you are in danger yourself.

Don't hang up until the call-taker tells you to. Follow any instructions the dispatcher gives.

For any questions or further information pertaining to the base's 911 system, call Bill Minnie, Fire Protection Specialist, Base Safety Center, at 257-1830.



3/3, *From A-1*

outside the wire for another patrol.

“I wanted to come here,” said 27-year-old Weiss. “That is why I joined the Marine Corps to begin with – to fight the terrorists.”

The Marines’ first few days here were spent conducting familiarization patrols of the area. According to Globis, it was a chance to “get to know the people, kids and common sights.”

But the Marines from 3/3, also known as America’s Battalion, have worked hand-in-hand with the outgoing unit to continue security operations here. The area was an insurgent-filled hot spot seven months ago before Marines and Iraqi soldiers wiped out nearly all remnants of the insurgency here.

Now, as Marines walk the streets, children are eager to approach and shake the hands of the Marines. One Marine put a smile on a child’s face when he gave him the remainder of a small amount of black electrical tape as a toy. Several feet behind him, another Marine was busy explaining basic commands to an Iraqi soldier named Ahmad.

The Marines keep one eye on their surroundings, another on their Iraqi comrades to ensure they’re practicing what they’ve learned. Proper patrolling techniques and a watchful eye can mean the difference between life and death in Al Anbar Province, especially on the roads. Marines keep a keen eye open for any signs of potential roadside bombs, called improvised explosive devices, on the streets.

Since January 2005, IEDs have accounted for about 50

percent of all U.S. fatalities in Iraq, according to the Iraq Coalition Casualty Count – an organization which tallies U.S. and coalition casualties based on information in Department of Defense press releases.

On one recent patrol, Hospitalman Leo Perez, one of Lima Company’s Navy hospital corpsmen, came upon what he called a sad sight. Perez discovered a 10-year-old boy in urgent need of medical care. The boy was bleeding heavily from one of his heels, which was cut by broken glass. Perez immediately treated the wound with disinfectant and bandages.

“I knew it would only take a few minutes to fix his foot up, but he would probably remember that for the rest of his life, and it made my day a better one knowing I helped a child,” said Perez, a 24-year-old from Burlington, Vt. “The child was being tough and trying not to cry. But I could see in his face he was relieved to have his foot bandaged up.”

The child’s parents were not in the area when Perez went to work on the child’s foot, but other children and elders in the area witnessed Perez’ actions. He said he believes simple acts like this will give the locals a more positive outlook on the presence of Coalition Forces.

“Helping the Iraqi people like this brings (them) on our side if they are unsure if they support us or not,” said Perez. “When they see actions like this, it might (turn) a future insurgent into someone that wants to help us fight insurgents.”

After taking care of the child’s wounded foot, Perez gave the child extra bandages, which the boy accepted with a warm smile.

“We have to have humanitarian concerns about these people,” said Perez. “There are a lot of people out there against us, and when they see humanitarian actions like that one, it changes their minds positively.”

Providing band aids to children and teaching urban patrolling tactics to Iraqi soldiers is all part of the process of coalition and Iraqi forces’ ultimate goal – helping the Iraqi government and people to self-sustainment.

“Everything we do out here, from patrolling the streets to convoys in and out of the city, involves the Iraqi security forces,” said Anderson Township, Ohio, native 1st Lt. Scott Perry, the company’s artillery forward observer.

Perry said the Marines from Lima Company were somewhat surprised at the receptiveness of their presence here. He believes the locals are tired of living under constant intimidation from insurgents.

“The locals are receptive of us and we want to keep it that way,” said Perry. “For the next seven months, we are going to aggressively patrol the streets and keep the Iraqi people here safe.”

Soon, the Marines from Lima Company will assist the Iraqi Security Forces in providing security during the upcoming local elections – another milestone for the town. They’ll also work with local government officials to begin and continue on-going civil affairs projects to improve local infrastructure here.

“Our goal is to leave here knowing these people are safe from insurgents,” said Perry. “We are going to do everything in our power to accomplish this.”



Sgt. Roe F. Seigle

A U.S. Marine from Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment patrols the outskirts of Barawanah, Iraq, with an Iraqi soldier March 23. The Hawaii-based Marines have worked hand-in-hand with the outgoing Marine unit to continue security operations in this small Iraqi town located off the Euphrates River about 155 miles northwest of Baghdad.



Sgt. Roe F. Seigle

Hospitalman Leo Perez, a U.S. Navy hospital corpsman from Burlington, Vt., prepares to treat a cut on the foot of a 10-year-old boy during a patrol with U.S. Marines and Iraqi soldiers in Barwanah, Iraq, March 23. Perez, 24, used disinfectant on the wound and wrapped it with bandages.

# Marines secure farmlands north of Fallujah

**Gunnery Sgt. Mark Oliva**

*1st Marine Division*

**DRA DIGLA, Iraq —** A platoon of Marines from D Company, 2nd Tank Battalion, joined with a reinforced squad from Company E, 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment to scour the area north of Fallujah for insurgent activity in Operation Mesopotamia II. The several-day operation took place in the Northern Regimental Security Area and disrupted insurgent activity, keeping terrorists from using the sparsely populated region as a staging area to launch attacks in Fallujah.

The combined tank-infantry team is serving in Iraq with Regimental Combat Team 5.

“We came out here to interdict anti-Iraqi forces and provide a secure environment for the Iraqi people,” said 2nd Lt. Jim A. Neville, a 32-year-old tank platoon commander from West Newfield, Maine. “It’s not a permanently occupied area for us, so there’s always something new for us.”

Marines conducted a series of cache sweeps, cordon-and-knocks and snap vehicle checkpoints, searching for hidden

weapons and insurgents on wanted lists. Marines searched abandoned chemical factories, squatters’ huts, farms and roadside stores. At least two were detained for matching descriptions of wanted individuals and several weapons were confiscated.

The operation marked just one smaller operation in a string of efforts north of Fallujah. While most Marines work in the more densely populated areas of Fallujah, Saqlawiyah and Ameriyah, the task-organized, infantry-armor teams made the most of their small-unit flexibility and imposing force of the M-1A1 Main Battle Tank.

“The people up here sometimes feel neglected,” Neville said. “They feel they don’t get the security they need against anti-Iraqi forces who intimidate and steal gas.”

Tanks led the convoy of Humvees and a 7-ton armored truck, loaded with Marines. They selected a site to search and tanks pushed out to cordon the area, main guns swinging back and forth as gunners searched for threats. Meanwhile, Marines dismounted and rushed to secure the buildings, moving all



Gunnery Sgt. Mark Oliva

A Marine walks alongside a rolling M-1A1 Main Battle Tank during a search of farm north of Fallujah as past of Operation Mesopotamia II. A platoon of tanks and a reinforced infantry squad conducted a series of weapons searches and snap vehicle checkpoints near Dra Digla to disrupt insurgent activity in the Northern Regimental Security Area recently.

military-aged males out and checking rooms and cars for contraband items.

The operations lasted sometimes for hours, as Marines questioned the men for information that could lead them to insurgents frequenting the area. Answers led to a trend of information and a few names.

Other missions had engineers sweeping berms for weapons

caches, hidden in the dirt. And still, others had Marines stopping suspect cars that matched the description of cars suspected of being used by insurgents.

Marines questioned and searched more than 350 military-aged men in less than three days, Neville estimated, creating a disruption of insurgent activity. Rolling the 70-ton tanks through the small towns sent

the signal Marines were here for business, denying insurgents free use of the area.

“The intimidation factor is there when you use tanks,” added Staff Sgt. Zachary Dona, a 29-year-old platoon sergeant from Quarryville, Pa. “Tanks integrated with infantry shows good presence and a lot of force.”

The presence of repeated missions to the area by tanks, infantry and crews of amphibious assault vehicles recently has paid off, Neville explained. Engineers swept miles of berms, farmland and enormous gaping wells scraped from the desert floor, known areas for hidden weapons. They turned up little, a sign Neville took as encouraging.

“It shows the efforts of the tanks and AAVs is paying off,” he said. “Six months ago, you could throw a stick and find a cache.”

For the infantry, the chance to work alongside tanks was a boost in confidence. They relied on tankers with their heavy armor and weapons to provide protection while they finished their searches and questioning.

“I was confident they knew their job,” said Cpl. Joshua J. Frazier, fire team leader, from Destin, Fla. “They intimidated anybody who wanted to mess with us.”

Frazier worked with tanks in the past for training, but this was his first chance to operate alongside them in a combat operation.

“They helped us to remain focused,” he explained. “We don’t worry so much about outside security. The reaction of the people was more calm. They knew we were there for business.”

Neville said, despite not maintaining a permanent presence, Marines were having a lasting effect in the area. Insurgents didn’t have free movement through the villages and the villagers themselves grew more trusting of the Marines’ intent.

“We know they have to adjust to our efforts,” he said. “We’re creating a time for the people to get established and the insurgents have to adjust around that, because we have a good idea of what they’re doing.”



### 1/3, *From A-1*

lage was basically deserted,” said Sgt. Nathan Zechman, 2nd squad leader, 3rd Platoon, Charlie Company, 1/3. “There was no one really in the village. I had a feeling something was going to go down,” recalled the Hershey, Pa., native.

As it turned out, Zechman’s gut feeling was right on the money.

“During our search of a home in Salar Ban, we discovered roughly 1,000 pounds of explosives with an additional 1,000 pounds of time fuses and other accessories used to detonate explosives,” said Spurlock.

During the search, the explosives were discovered by two combat engineers attached to Charlie Company – Lance Cpl. Jordan Mills, from Louisville, Ky., and Lance Cpl. Daniel Johnson, from Salt Lake City.

“Almost as soon as we got the word that the explosives were found, I saw a back-blast from an RPG (rocket-propelled grenade) and saw the RPG headed straight for us,” said Lance Cpl. Brandon Benz-Marrs, assaultman, 3rd Platoon, Charlie Company, 1/3. “I dived down and thought, ‘This is it. We’re dead.’ Then, somehow, it ended up landing about 15 meters from us. None of us were hit. We didn’t have time to count our luck. We immediately started sending rounds down range,” recalled the Wailuku, Maui native.

What ensued over the next 30 minutes was a ferocious firefight between Marines from Charlie Company and the insurgents, the likes of which Charlie Company Marines hadn’t seen since the battle of Fallujah in Iraq in November of 2004, noted Sgt. Michael Chambers, platoon sergeant, 3rd Platoon, Charlie Company, 1/3.

“The Marines who hadn’t seen combat before got their wish today,” said Chambers, a Purple Heart and Bronze Star (with combat distinguishing device) recipient from Lexington, S.C. “The enemy had the terrain advantage. The potential was there for them

to put a hurting on us, but the Marines did what they were trained to do and, in the end, we crushed them.”

Indeed, according to Spurlock, later reports estimated that upwards of 20 insurgents were killed in the firefight and in the artillery bombardment and air support that followed.

“All told, including the initial firefight, the battle lasted over an hour, but once the big guns and air support came in there was nothing the enemy could do,” said Chambers. “During the course of the operation I heard we killed 20 of them. I wish it was 21. There is always room for one more dead Taliban who is trying to kill Marines, our ANA brothers and innocent Afghans.”

Many Lava Dogs from Charlie Company called it a miracle that there were no Marine casualties during the exchange.

“I think it was a combination of a miracle by God and Marine Corps training that none of us were killed or wounded at Salar Ban,” said Lance Cpl. Jose Romero, 1st Fire Team Leader, 3rd Squad, 3rd Platoon, Charlie Company, 1/3. “For a minute there I thought I was going to die, but I never felt fear. All I felt was the Marine Corps training kicking in. It seemed like we were in one firefight or another every day on this operation, but Salar Ban was definitely the worst, or, if you think about it, the best.”

Others were a little less spiritual in their outlook on the battle at Salar Ban.

“Yeah, I’m surprised none of us died at Salar Ban,” said Cpl. David Gordon, 3rd Squad Leader, 3rd Platoon, Charlie Company, 1/3. “There were a lot of close calls,” continued the Bowling Springs, S.C., native. “It just came down to they missed and we didn’t”

“It was luck no Marines got killed,” said Mills. “Pure and simple good old-fashioned luck. The Marines are good. But I’d rather be lucky than good any day.”

“They shot crooked and we shot straight,” added Frost in his summation of the firefight.

Others chalked up events at

Salar Ban to neither divine intervention nor luck, but rather to the superiority of Marine Corps training and the fighting spirit of the individual Marines.

“To have RPGs and AK-47s shot at you, you would think that the reasonable man theory would kick in and you’d start spazzing the heck out and dive in a ditch or something,” said Davis. “These guys didn’t do that at all. They held their positions and immediately put lead back toward the enemy. The Marines did good. No, they did better than good. They were awesome.”

Some would say none more so than Davis himself.

“Years from now, probably most of the Marines who were at Salar Ban won’t remember how Gunny Davis steadfastly checked on the safety of his Marines or advanced on the enemy, but rather that it was he who first broke the tension of combat by cracking open an MRE (meals ready to eat) immediately after the initial firing stopped and said to a group of Marines in his nonchalant way, ‘Combat makes me hungry,’” recalled Chambers. “That’s the stuff of legends.”

Countless other Marines distinguished themselves during the battle, according to Davis, but it was Frost who most Lava Dogs seemed to be talking about following the victory.

“He’s not the type of Marine leader who is yelling instructions from the distance,” said Cpl. William Graves, 1st Fire Team Leader, 1st Squad, 3rd Platoon, Charlie Company, 1/3. “He’s going to be right there beside his grunts on the frontlines of the fight, just like he was at Salar Ban,” observed the Bowling Green, Ky., native.

“It’s just basic human instinct that, when you are getting shot at, you take cover,” said Romero, a native of La Mirada, Calif. “It is even how we are trained in the Marine Corps – take cover and then return fire. I never saw Lieutenant Frost take cover. We were under fire and he was walking around barking orders making sure his Marines were OK and that they were doing

the right things tactically. He was like an action hero from the movies. I never thought I’d see something like that in real life. His example inspired us and gave us all confidence.”

Frost, who was previously wounded in action during a firefight Jan. 25 by an AK-47 round, was quick to downplay any heroism on his part during the events at Salar Ban.

“All that stuff about me not taking cover, that’s not exactly true,” said Frost, a native of Zeeland, Mich. “I took cover just like everyone else when the first barrage hit, but once I figured out where the rounds were coming from, I felt good enough about my location to walk around in certain areas. It might have appeared like I was just walking around like a madman, but that’s not exactly how it went down. I was just doing my job, finding my squad leaders, making sure they were good to go and ensuring that we had combined-arms fire going down range.”

“During the fight I never felt fear, and I never saw fear on the faces of my Marines,” continued Frost. “It’s only after the fact, when you have some time to think about it when you go, ‘Man, I really could have gotten killed today.”

For most of the Lava Dogs who served at Salar Ban, it was more than just a little coincidence that the enemy attacked soon after the explosives were discovered.

“As soon as we found the explosives, they pretty much instantly opened up on us,” said Chambers. “It doesn’t take a rocket scientist to know they weren’t happy about us finding a stash of explosives that they had easy access to and could pretty much dip into any time they wanted. They knew the explosives were there – no question about it.”

According to Lance Cpl. Anthony Mitchell, an intelligence specialist from Burlington, Colo., attached to Charlie Company, 1/3, it was the largest such explosive cache find since coalition forces first came to Afghanistan in 2001.

“There is a big problem having a thousand pounds of

explosives right in the backyard of the insurgents,” said Frost, “where there is one bad guy for every pound of explosives we found. It’s a huge security risk having that much material potentially in the hands of the enemy.”

“The significance of this company operation was the recovery of the explosives that I believe will directly result in lives being saved – not just Marines but other coalition members and ANA and ANP (Afghan National Police) forces,” said Spurlock. “When we can take away the enemy’s access to explosives, we are also taking away their ability to put those explosives on the roads in the form of IEDs, and that directly results in the lives of coalition forces being saved. Anytime we can take explosives out of the reach of the bad guys, it is a victory.”

That may have been so, but there was still more fight left to be fought during the operation, noted Chambers.

As Marines from Charlie Company continued to push deeper into the Shuryak Valley over the course of the next several days, reports of enemy fighters moving toward the area were received.

Based on these reports, the decision was made to move elements from Alpha Company and Bravo Company to the area, along with elements of the battalion command.

“It was a desire to pile on when we knew there were enemy fighters in the area,” stated one officer from the battalion headquarters. “We were looking for a fight.”

For a while following the battle at Salar Ban, it seemed as though the enemy was too.

“We got a lot of intelligence reports that enemy fighters were moving into the Shuryak Valley from Korengal and also from north of the Pech River

and that they were planning to attack Charlie Company on their withdrawal from the region,” said Lt. Col. James Bierman, commanding officer, 1/3. “Based on the fact that there was enemy in the area, and based on a desire to make sure that Charlie Company was able to leave on its own terms, we moved additional forces to the area.”

“Marines from Alpha had already been in the field for 12 days on another mission, and Bravo Marines had been manning a ridgeline near Camp Blessing when they received the order to conduct operations in Shuryak,” continued Bierman. “They demonstrated a lot of flexibility on very short notice and headed for the Shuryak. Those Marines climbed a 7,300-foot mountain, pausing to clear a cave area on the way up, and provided Charlie Company with the covering support they needed. Having the additional Marines up there ultimately made the enemy rethink any plans they may have had to hit Charlie on their retrograde from the Shuryak.”

After successfully covering Charlie Company during their retrograde out of the valley, Apache helicopters providing air support uncovered a group of fighters who were preparing to attack Alpha Company. After a short gunfight, those enemy fighters broke contact and withdrew from the area.

“I’m proud of the Marines from Charlie Company,” said Bierman. “The operation unfolded the way Captain Spurlock planned it, and his Marines handled themselves superbly during the fighting that occurred during this operation. I’m equally proud of the Marines from Alpha and Bravo Company who moved up on the ridgeline to support and cover Charlie Company’s withdrawal.”